

A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO PASTORAL CARE  
IN THE MILITARY COMMUNITY

A Professional Project  
Presented to the faculty of the  
School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

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May 1985

*This professional project, completed by*

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*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty  
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## PREFACE

This study and project were motivated by the need for the writer to develop a model for doing Pastoral Care and Counseling in the Army community. The specific context is a Family Life Center where opportunities for pastoral ministry come in a variety of forms. This ministry varies from civilian parish ministry in that it normally includes a broader scope of the community in its concerns. Most of the people who come for help are not seeking religious direction as much as they are looking for solutions to their problems in a "safe" environment. Problem solving is approached systematically and the evidence of change that is most sought by the Chaplain, for hurting people, is community. In this project a model is presented that works towards that end.

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## ABSTRACT

The intention of this professional project is to set forth a model for doing pastoral care in a military community. Specifically, the pastoral care task focuses on ministry to families. Generally, the scope of concerns is much more inclusive in that pastoral concerns for singles, individuals, and so on, are not overlooked.

The model for doing pastoral care in the environment of a military community is established in two approaches. First, there is discussion of what a systems approach to pastoral care includes. Second, selected central themes of the Christian faith are discussed and presented as the theological foundations for this ministry.

The challenge of blending the two above approaches is set forth in a contextual application. The actual outcome of the ministry design proved to be rather interesting in that the "people helpers" became deeply involved in the learning phases and the actual ministry became a source of significant growth for them.

## CHAPTER ONE

### PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION

This project addresses the challenge of providing effective, efficient pastoral ministry to a highly mobile, mission-oriented community. The relevance and importance of this issue is directly connected with the experience and ministry of the Army Chaplain.

Within the Army community one may find an example of almost everything of which American culture is composed. The community is truly a microcosm of American society in general. While there are uniquenesses, there is more similarity to civilian life than not. In the midst of this community, and deeply involved in its life, is the Army Chaplain, the pastor to the military. The chaplain shares, at the deepest level, with members of his/her community. Such concerns for promotion, good efficiency reports, good assignments, family needs, and so on, are common sources of fear, joy and frustration experienced by all members of the military establishment. This shared experience serves to make possible an empathetic bond between the chaplain and those he/she serves. It is this relationship that serves as a foundation for the purpose of this project. How can one provide effective, efficient pastoral care to the Army community?

The Army community is like the civilian sector and yet, as stated above, in many ways it is quite unique. Some



of the uniqueness includes such things as: frequent moves at the behest of the Army; "the mission," which overshadows the professional and personal life of military members and their families. There is the loneliness that is often the result of isolated tours in foreign countries. There is pain due to readjustment, being the "outsider," and having to earn one's way into a community. There is competition for promotion and recognition, without which one may lose one's place in the system. Further, there is the problem of retirement. What happens to those people who are faced with the loss of meaning and identity the military system provides? There is a pastoral responsibility, yet the energy demands on the chaplain to meet the needs of active duty people is such that there is really little that can be done to meet the needs of the retiree. Children of military persons are faced with the constant school change and the anxiety that goes along with making new friends often gives rise to family stress and problems that run deep. Priorities that put career ahead of all else place many marriages in a posture that too often results in divorce. Perhaps, more than anything else, the sense of rootlessness is nowhere more evident or manifested in our society than in the military. Vance Packard remarked on the shallow roots of Americans in general when he stated, "We are becoming a nation of strangers."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Vance Packard, A Nation of Strangers, (New York: McKay, 1972) 10.

The lack of community response is of considerable concern to the military pastor.

What then is the response of the Christian community to the world community? From a systems understanding and an evangelical theological stance, this project asserts that the Body of Christ is the best answer to meeting the needs of the community. While it is recognized that much of what the community demands in terms of care is not usually termed "religious," it is almost always spiritual in nature. As such, it follows that the people most likely concerned with the outcome of this discussion will be the spiritual "practitioners" who seek to work in the community of the world while drawing on the community of the Church for strength and direction.

The principles of evangelical theology, combined with insights from systems theorists, provide the ingredients for an integration of ideas that form the structure of the pastoral care model. The position of this paper is that an approach composed of the above ingredients offers one of the most effective ways to bring about solutions to problems and to provide enrichment for persons living within the community of the U. S. Army.

In this project several terms will be recurring, and while most require little or no definition, it would be helpful to define two or three of the terms more clearly.

To begin with, the meaning of "pastoral care" in a Christian context is offered by C. W. Brister: "Biblically

and practically, pastoral care is the mutual concern of Christians for each other and for those in the world for whom Christ died."<sup>2</sup>

Brister clearly states in simple terms several important aspects of pastoral care. It is understood biblically, which is important, because it is from scripture that pastoral perceptions are developed and honed for ministry. Another important aspect is that of mutuality. It is the position of this writer that pastoral care in the military is truly best accomplished when Christians extend themselves to minister to the world, while at the same time caring for each other.

Another term will occur frequently called "systems" or "systematic." Here is a concise definition (to be repeated later) of a highly complex theory:

Briefly stated, Systems Theory is an attempt to organize all data about human behaviour into a total unitary system. Any one element of the system must be placed in juxtaposition to all other elements. Each element influences, interacts and is mutually reciprocal with all other elements.

It will be useful to keep certain themes of the Christian faith in mind that are developed with a view towards the integration of a systems approach to pastoral care and reflect the thinking of the writer.

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<sup>2</sup>C. W. Brister, Pastoral Care In The Church (New York: Harper & Row, 1964) xxiii.

<sup>3</sup>Mansel Pattison, "Systems Pastoral Care," Journal Of Pastoral Care 26:1 (1972) 5.

1. God is creator and sustainer of the world, and in the world He has and does actively involve Himself in the human experience.
2. The most complete revelation of God is Jesus in His earthly ministry, humiliation, death, and resurrection.
3. Scripture is the authoritative source for understanding God, His actions, and human responsibilities in relationship to God and others.
4. The power of God leads to the transformation of not only individuals but whole communities.<sup>4</sup>

While these themes do not encompass the whole of Christian thought in matters that pertain to ministry they are, for this paper, the basic statements upon which a theological model will be developed. These four themes will be developed in Chapter IV.

Pastoral care, in this writer's view, to a military community, is best framed in the light of the hope and grace that God imparts to all.

From beyond our own existence and resources God comes into our human life to impart grace in time of need; the language of personal relationship .<sup>5</sup> . best expresses the Gospel witness about man . . .

For Donald Bloesch, "authentic evangelicalism is best tested and developed when it is correlated with its object, the revealed Word of God."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Donald Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology (New York: Harper & Row, 1979) II, 238.

<sup>5</sup>F. F. Bruce, "Myth and History," in Colin Brown (ed.) History, Criticism, and Faith (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1976) 86.

<sup>6</sup>Bloesch, 15.

Pastoral care, in the context of this project, holds that the relationship to God is the best foundation upon which human relationships can be built.<sup>7</sup>

More on the theological material will be introduced later in the project.

I need to say something about the distinctive context of an Army Chaplain. One person summed up the uniqueness of the Army environment in these words:

. . . (it) . . . is related to the predominant role of authority difficulties in the service. A civilian who has problems stemming from his feelings toward authority has enough trouble. He has teachers in school, professors in college, employers, doctors, policemen, lawyers and others - but he does not have to live with them! In the service he has military policemen, military physicians, military lawyers and others - and he has the total structure of command from which he cannot escape, day or night.

It must be added that even the pastoral care system is military in structure. The Army Chaplain faces a community of continual change and turbulence. It is to this community that pastors in uniform seek to bring the care and support of the pastoral calling. In an atmosphere of violence, proclaiming peace. In a system of incredible competition, the chaplain brings a message of affirmation for all.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., I, 15.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas A. Harris, Counseling The Serviceman And His Family (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964) 20.

<sup>9</sup>Charles Moskos, "Preface," in Hamilton I. Mc Cubbin, Barbara B. Dahl, and Edna J. Hunter (eds.) Families In The Military System (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1976) 10.

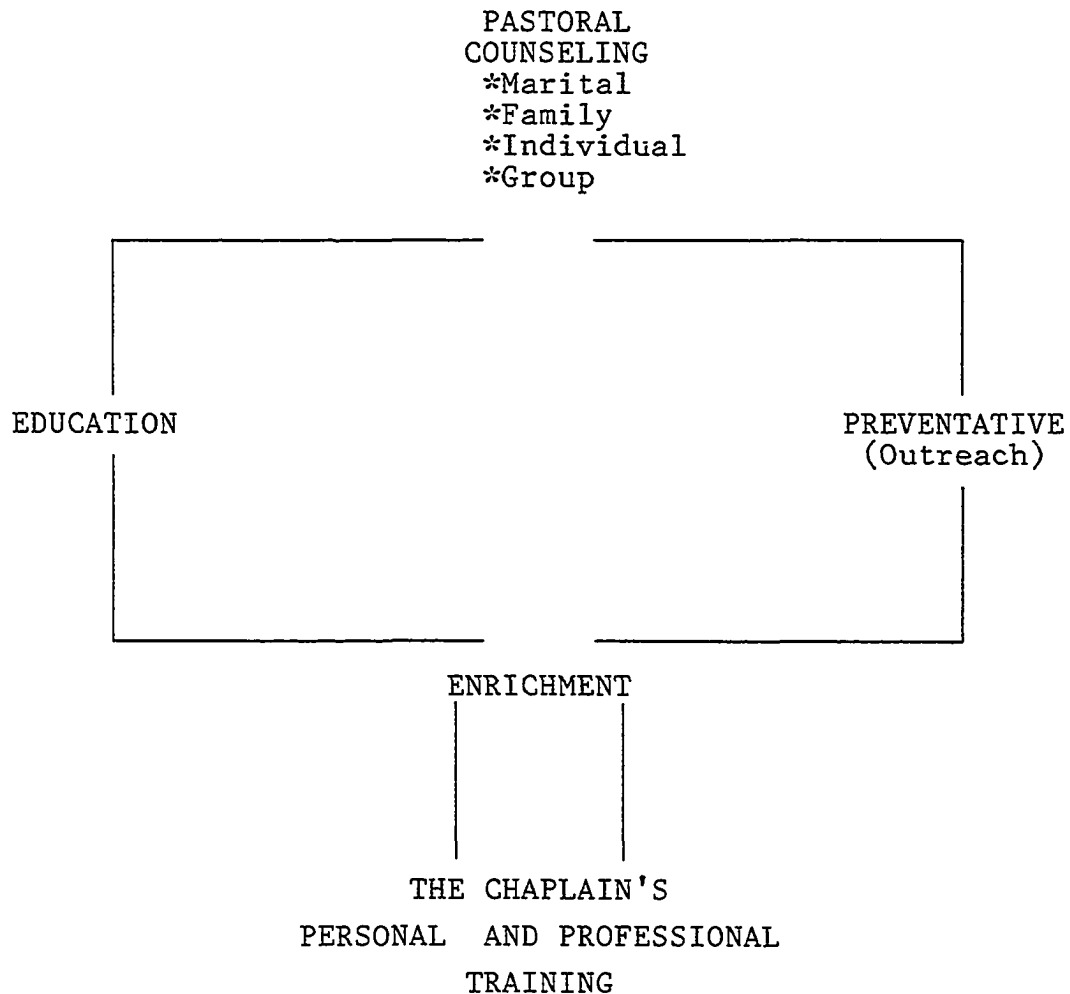
The Army community, while a microcosm of American life and culture, is also unique and distinctive. The constant awareness of one's military identity is difficult, if not impossible, to escape - whether the person is a military servicemember or a family member.

The particular context out of which this project is developed is that of a "Community Life Ministry." This ministry focuses on a number of areas of the Fort Leavenworth, Kansas community. Fort Leavenworth is the home of the U. S. Army Command and General Staff College. The majority of the population, unlike that found on most Army installations, is composed of officers and their families. All branches of the military are represented. Most officers are here for a ten-month school. There are several hundred officers and their families that are "permanent party," i.e. staff and faculty. Additionally, there is a large military prison on post that is staffed by several hundred enlisted and officer personnel. Stress is relatively high for those in the school program, in that it is perceived as an extremely important school in the officer's career development. Selectivity is quite competitive and carries a significant aura of recognition with it. Families are faced with a brief adjustment time, after which it is necessary for them to pack up and move to the assignment that follows the ten-month school for the student officer.

The primary responsibility of the chaplain in the Com-

munity Life Ministry Program is to provide opportunities for counseling, enrichment and growth, as well as opportunities to work on problem areas in parenting, marriage communication, stress, and human sexuality. (See Fig. 1)

Fig. 1  
Diagram of  
Community Life Ministry



Military families and their needs for pastoral ministry are the primary focus of this project. In preparation for this paper, it became clear that little material is available that addresses the issues of ministry to the military community. The works that are cited are fairly recent in the fields of family and marriage in the military environment. In his March, 1979, newsletter, then Army Chief of Chaplains, Orris Kelly, stated:

The important focus on the family as a basic unit of ministry has its roots deep in our cultural and theological heritages. Yet, "family" has a wider meaning than only the nuclear grouping. There are the "work unit family" (where large numbers of single soldiers are), the extended family, the single-parent family and, of course, those in the family of faith.<sup>10</sup>

One of the better studies that looked at the impact of military life on the lives of military members and their families came out of the Viet Nam War. The Department of Defense conducted a study during the years 1972-1978. This study was the first large-scale study of any depth ever done by the Department of Defense. Edna Hunter comments:

It (the study) led to the development of innovative techniques for assessing family functioning and adjustment to stress. A better understanding of family coping techniques and the implementations of better family support programs should make for happier, healthier, military families with higher morale, more efficient perfor-

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<sup>10</sup>Orris Kelly, Army Chief of Chaplains Newsletter (March, 1979).



mance on the part of the servicemember and fewer requirements with respect to health care services.<sup>11</sup>

Although ministry to Armed Forces personnel and dependents is not a topic presently receiving a great deal of attention, it is receiving more interest now. One of the most helpful books dealing with families in the military is one edited by McCubbin, Dahl and Hunter, entitled Families In The Military System. Hunter and Nice have also edited Children Of Military Families. Both of these volumes provide considerable help in developing the theme of this project.

Gary Collins, Professor of Pastoral Psychology at the Trinity Divinity School, is a key resource in developing the proposal that makes up the final chapter of this project. His "discipleship counseling" provides help in developing a contextual application of a systems approach when integrated with an evangelical theology.

Donald Bloesch has produced a two-volume systematic theology that is helpful in developing the theological concepts for this project.<sup>12</sup>

The integration of a theological and philosophical understanding for the purpose of accomplishing the task of pastoral care in the Army community is the expected outcome

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<sup>11</sup>Edna J. Hunter, "Combat Casualties Who Reamin At Home," Military Review 69:1 (1980) 29.

<sup>12</sup>Bloesch.

of this project. The integration is important, as it provides not only a working model for ministry, but also makes a distinctive statement that sets ministry apart from other helping professions. Dr. Ruth Barnhouse highlighted this distinction in the "Journal of Pastoral Care."

There are some very important differences between psycho-therapy and spiritual direction. The most obvious one is the standard by which results are to be evaluated. Most psychotherapy measures results primarily against the needs and wishes of the individual, with varying amounts of consideration being given to the social requirements of the immediate community, of which the subject forms a part.

In short, the reference point is on the human plane. By contrast, the reference point in spiritual direction is not on the human plane, but is the subject's relation to God, and the participation in the entire Christian community, the invisible Body of Christ.<sup>13</sup>

Resources for ministry are clearly to be seen as a vital key in accomplishing the contextual task. How can the system minister to the system? The system that is the Body of Christ certainly has a relationship to the world community. Barth wrote: "The community of Jesus Christ is itself creature and therefore, world. Hence, as it exists for men and the world, it also exists for itself."<sup>14</sup>

The task of the Body of Christ is also the task of a subsystem to minister.

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<sup>13</sup>Ruth T. Barnhouse, "Spiritual Direction And Psychotherapy," Journal of Pastoral Care 33:3 (1979) 152-153.

<sup>14</sup>Karl Barth, "The Community For The World," in Roy S. Anderson (ed.) Theological Foundations For Ministry (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 499.

After setting the stage for the project in the first chapter, subsequent chapters will progress along the lines noted below. The first chapter will describe the context in which the application of the proposed pastoral care model will occur. The sphere of ministry will be described first in a general sense, in that the Army community as a whole will be discussed. The description will be refined further to describe the situation in which the writer is actually working.

Chapter Two discusses the meaning of community in a more global sense, thus laying groundwork for tying community into the means whereby pastoral ministry can function most effectively. More specifically, the chapter will relate the meaning of community to the matter of understanding systems or networks that provide structures for people to be and become. Finally, the matter of community will be discussed briefly in terms of a theological understanding of community.

Chapter Three seeks to set out some of the basic concepts that are included in systems thinking and theory. While the definitions are necessarily elementary and brief, they are intended to provide a somewhat adequate foundation upon which to build. More specifically, this chapter will seek to relate systems approach to aspects of pastoral ministry.

Chapter Four will develop the idea that three expressions (Body of Christ, Covenant Community, Household of

Faith) found in the New Testament, to describe the Christian community in the apostolic church, are adequate metaphors upon which to build towards a systems approach to pastoral ministry in the Army context.

Chapter Five will examine the "subsystems" of the church in the light of their value in providing a ministry to the community of the world, i.e., the community outside of the "Body of Christ."

In the Sixth Chapter, a model for accomplishing the mission of providing pastoral care to the Army community will be offered. In this section, it is anticipated that a program to include the recruitment, training, supervision, and evaluation of lay persons to do the work of tending the community will be adequately developed and understood.

## CHAPTER TWO

## THE MEANING OF COMMUNITY

Community Defined

My thesis throughout the entire project is that community is a fundamental need in human experience and that community is essential to sustaining life, hope, and meaning. Martin Buber wrote: "In the beginning is the relation."<sup>1</sup> God, in this writer's view, has always existed in relationship, thus, in community. It is in a relationship that the best that God intends for people is realized. God's grace is committed to life in union - never in isolation, and the very essentials of human nature are relational in kind. The hope for humans in existential conflict is in community. Values, meaning, understanding, are all gained in the experience of community. Growth of the human soul and spirit is experienced not in isolation, but in some kind of inter-relational experience. Harry S. Sullivan perceived the goals of behavior in two inter-related dimensions: the pursuit of satisfaction and the pursuit of security. In the realm of security, Sullivan saw the human animal as being accepted or belonging. Sullivan, it seems, recognized the

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<sup>1</sup>Martin Buber, I And Thou (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970) 69.

absolute necessity of community in the process of socialization.<sup>2</sup>

The antithesis of community, in this discussion, is undesired alienation, the experience of being alone, cut off, and unrelated to the world community. Francis Schaeffer, in writing of cosmic alienation, states:

But modern man does, in fact, assume wittingly and unwittingly - that the universe and man can be explained by the impersonal, plus time, plus change. And in this case, man and his aspirations stand in total alienation from what is . . . Alienation in the ghettos, alienation in the university, alienation from parents, alienation on every side. Sometimes those who are only playing with these ideas and have not gotten down into the real guts of it forget that the basic alienation with which they are faced is a cosmic alienation. Simply this: there is nobody at home in the universe. There is no one and nothing there to conform to who you are or what you hope. That is the dilemma.<sup>3</sup>

The meaning of community may vary in some ways, depending on the point of view of the individual; however, one thing is consistently apparent: community is essential to one's existence. In the midst of a particularly difficult counseling experience that appeared to be leading to a divorce one counselee remarked: "I don't think I can stand to be alone. In fact, there is really nothing to live for if I can only live for myself." That remark serves to illustrate how radically important community is. In the June, 1964,

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<sup>2</sup>Robert A. Harper, 36 Systems of Psychoanalysis And Psychotherapy (Inglewood Cliffs: Spectrum, 1959) 66.

<sup>3</sup>Francis A. Schaeffer, The Church At The End Of The 20th Century (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1970) 15.

issue of Pastoral Psychology - Robert Edgar wrote: ". . . we become a person only in interpersonal relationships."<sup>4</sup>

Elton Trueblood, in The Predicament of Modern Man, states:

There is a vast amount of loneliness and a consequent desire to belong to something. . . . Real fellowship is so rare and so precious that it is like dynamite in any human situation. Any group that will find a way to the actual sharing of human lives will make a difference either for good or ill for the modern world. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Community appears to stand solely as the most satisfactory means for humans to grow to full potential, face problems, and find success in their living.

Community then presents us with the possibility for life in relation to someone else. The precedent of God's moving toward humankind gives theological basis to the benefit of community. Bruce Larson writes:

This points up the nature of life and the flavor of hell, lostness, estrangement in terms that anyone can understand. . . . God became flesh in the Incarnation and lived among us in Jesus Christ and died and was raised from the dead so that a man and his wife would not have to destroy a marriage with irrelevant arguments - and so that man would not have to blow up his world for reasons irrelevant or otherwise. Jesus Christ came to enable relationships that bring people closer to one another and closer to God.<sup>6</sup>

This meaning of community must be examined in terms of the church as community in the midst of the larger secular

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<sup>4</sup>Robert A. Edgar, "The Listening Structured Group," Pastoral Psychology 15:145 (June 1964) 12.

<sup>5</sup>Elton Trueblood, The Predicament of Modern Man (New York: Harper & Row, 1944) 100-101.

<sup>6</sup>Bruce Larson, No Longer Strangers (Waco: Word Books, 1971) 19.

community. The church community, as a community for being, is essential to the secular community both to bear witness to the community and to minister to a world that is likely to show little or no interest in Christian matters whatsoever. Elton Trueblood writes: "We need to be reminded that the church exists for men and not men for the church."<sup>7</sup>

### The Military Community

Within the context of the military environment, the impact of mobility, necessitated by military service, often has negative results. On the negative side there is loss of community. One social scientist notes:

In terms of pathology . . . Sorokin drew a definite relationship between pathology, alienation, and geographical mobility, stating that an increase of a decrease of mobility is a condition which considerably influences the chances of a close intimacy with other men, the desirability of a real community of feeling, an urgent need of a unity of understanding, a close friendship.<sup>8</sup>

This matter of community and geographical mobility in the military is examined extensively by Jerry L. McKain, whose research has revealed a considerable lack of available literature in the study of the impact of geographical mobility

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<sup>7</sup>Elton Trueblood, The Incendiary Fellowship (New York: Harper & Row, 1967) 28.

<sup>8</sup>Jerry McKain, "Alienation: A Function Of Geographical Mobility Among Families," in Hamilton I. McCubbin, Barbara Dahl and Edna J. Hunter (eds.) Families In The Military System (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1976) 70.



on the military family. Nevertheless, McKain points out that the literature that does exist stresses the importance of the nuclear family's involvement with the extended family and the broader community in general.<sup>9</sup>

A summary of McKain's research includes a number of significant findings. First, family problems are frequently related directly to the feeling experienced as alienation. Second, anxiety, rigidity and hostility are associated with alienation. Third, the reaction of the nonmilitary spouse to potential alienating situations directly effects the rest of the family members. Fourth, marital problems are often associated with alienation.<sup>10</sup>

It is this reaction to alienation that the pastoral counselor must frequently face in the Army community. The pastoral task is enhanced when the commitment to integration into relationships is backed by the experience and understanding that God's reconciling work through Jesus Christ leads to the redemption of the lost and valueless.

It is in the security of the community that most families find their capacity to grow and feel secure. Once that security was denied, life was experienced in isolation.

The informal caretaking system is an important adaptive subcultural response to the exigencies of military life. Its availability suggests the need for allowing the soldier's family to remain in the military community when he is assigned overseas and for recognizing the family

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 173.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 90-91.

as a continuing member of the subculture. This support system's operation is a significant element in any family's social reality and ability to master problems.<sup>11</sup>

Clearly, evidence shows that the effect of mobility and other disruptions in the lifestyle of adolescents leaves them quite vulnerable. One researcher writes: "The capacity for intimacy involving sustained interpersonal relationships was the factor which appeared to be the most vulnerable to geographic mobility."<sup>12</sup>

Gerald L. Klerman wrote an article that pointedly illustrates the inherent difficulties arising out of alienation:

The three most common social support systems have been the family, the church, and the immediate neighborhood. Ever since the introduction of urban life, we have relied upon those three social support systems as buttresses against disruptive emotional states, including depression, fear and anger. It is a characteristic of the present time that all three of those social support systems are in various degrees of disarray.<sup>13</sup>

What this section of the project is seeking to establish is: (1) the need for community as a universal need, and (2) that the loss of community usually results in alienation. The importance of this point is related most obviously

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<sup>11</sup>Frank F. Montalvo, "Family Separation In The Army," in *ibid.*, 173.

<sup>12</sup>John A. Shaw, "The Adolescent Experience And The Military Family," in Edna J. Hunter D. Stephen Nice, Children Of Military Families (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1978) 11.

<sup>13</sup>Gerald L. Klerman, "The Age Of Melancholy?" Psychology Today 12:11 (April 1979) 42.

to the development of a worthwhile approach to pastoral care. It is in the midst of all the change, something that is on-going in the military community, that the chaplain must find his/her pastoral task. The awareness of the depth of the need for belonging is absolutely essential to the establishment of a credible ministry.

## CHAPTER THREE

## SYSTEMS APPROACH: A RESPONSE TO THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY

The application of systems theory to pastoral care and counseling in the military community provides a most useful and vital model for ministry to families and individuals seeking help in the Family Life Ministry context. Because systems theory focuses on the inter-relatedness of members of a whole, rather than on the whole itself, the quality and force of these relationships are frequently the best source for finding clues in family dysfunctions.

Systems and subsystems in the military that are of concern and interest to the pastoral counselor might include the following: first, there is the military system itself. The machine-like indifference of this system often leaves the member of the military community frustrated, apathetic, angry and cynical. This system includes the entire spectrum of bureaucratic happenings. This system is composed of commanders/superiors, peers and sometimes even subordinates. This system is also made up of nameless and faceless regulations that define, not always too clearly, the expectations of the individuals within the system. The military system is really the first in priority for a servicemember, for it can order him/her to any place, anytime, and for any purpose. One subsystem of note is that of the family/peer group. The non-service family member is frequently subject to the direc-

tives of the military and is thus put in stressful situations due to moves, new cultures, and new relationships.

Systems theory is an approach that offers a means of confronting the multi-faceted issues that characterize the military community. Often the very nature of the military structure is to resist change or challenges to traditions and regulations. Systems theory provides the pastoral worker a framework of understanding to effectively encounter stubborn hierarchies and initiate change that will allow the system opportunity for growth, and the individual members hope for change.

### General Systems Theory

In its most fundamental stages, systems theory is applied here for the purpose of lifting up the relational aspects of community.

Briefly stated, systems theory is an attempt to organize all data about human behavior into a total unitary system. Any one element of the system must be placed in juxtaposition to all other elements. Each element influences, interacts,<sup>1</sup> and is mutually reciprocal with all other elements.

It is the relationship and interaction of the systems' components that make systems theory applicable to this project.

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<sup>1</sup>Helen E. Durkin, "Analytic Group Therapy And General Systems Theory," Clifford Sager and Helen Kaplan (eds.) Progress In Group And Family Therapy (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1972) 5.

Systems theory perceives the individual as a process or system; in this perception, a person is viewed as an integral, functioning part of a larger dynamic system, the social matrix.<sup>2</sup>

Historically, systems theory was preceded by the Cartesian era, a time when science was dominated by physics, and all science was systematized by reductive analysis. Teleology was regarded as nothing more than a remnant of an unscientific era. Eventually, reductive analysis reached a dead-end, in that the smallest and largest elements proved beyond further analysis. Eventually, it was discovered that goal-directed behavior, growth and creativity could be accounted for scientifically by the dynamics of interaction among the component parts of any living system. At last the relationship between personality as a whole, its function in society, and society itself, could be studied in good scientific conscience.<sup>3</sup>

### Principles of Systems Theory

Systems theory postulates that organized complexities, or "systems" as they came to be called, are the product of the interaction among their parts, rather than the sum of their absolute characteristics. Put another way, neither the resultant whole, nor its new characteristics, can be explained by the nature of the parts themselves; they can only be

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 10-11.

understood as a function of the continuous interchange of matter, energy, and information among these parts. Systems theory is defined by Hall and Fagen:

. . . as a set of objects, together with the relationships between the objects and between their attributes. The objects are the component parts of the system, the attributes are the properties of the objects, and the relationships tie the system together.<sup>4</sup>

The world is thus conceived phenomenologically as hierarchy. Each system faces downward, as it were, toward its subsystems, and upward toward its supra-systems. This concept is better illustrated in the following from Skynner:

The universe as we know it is neither completely homogeneous nor totally discrepant, but composed of parts . . . We can discriminate between which relationships of various kinds can be observed. In other words, it has a structure; the parts can be ordered in various ways. The relationships between the parts are not static, but change at varying rates, more rapidly in the combustion of a fire, less rapidly in the movement of a river, slower still in the erosion of a cliff by the sea. The universe not only has structure, but seen over time is a process of changing structure, where the changes also show relationships one to another . . . At the limits of the living thing, dividing it from the surrounding world, is the boundary. This boundary permits, or ensures, that certain materials pass across it, entering the organism from outside or passing from it out into the surroundings, while restricting or preventing the exchange of other elements.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to keep in mind that a systems approach, as applied in the context of this project, is viewed

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<sup>4</sup>A. Hall and B. Fagen, "Definition Of System," in General Systems Yearbook I (1956) 18.

<sup>5</sup>A. D. Robin Skynner, Systems Of Marital And Psychotherapy (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1976) 4.

as a means of understanding problems, and preparing a vehicle for response to the problems. Systems theory itself is compatible with most behavior models and therapeutic approaches. Systems theory breaks from traditional approaches in that it calls for an examination of the here and now by looking at the interrelatedness of components, rather than focusing in on one aspect of the system. Systems thinking supports the utilization of all possible resources within a system as well as those appropriate resources from without that will lead to change in position or direction. When viewing the military system from the subsystem of the family or individual soldier, there can be a tendency toward frustration and subsequent "getting nowhere" behavior. A systems approach helps frame this view by suggesting that alterations can occur for the individual that will lead to change. As an example of this reframing note, the words of Gerhardt Hyatt, former Chief of Army Chaplains:

For us, this requires that we view the Army's system as our client, as well as our employer. You might say we need to view the Army system as being a soul that needs to be watched over. Perhaps in the past we have made too much of the fact that the religious program in the Army is the commander's program, and not our own. It is his program and it should be, but that means that the commander is also our parishioner. It also means that we should treat the system of command as being within our area of concern . . . determine where the system, as well as the individual soldiers, are hurting and what is causing the pain. Wherever the system is hurting, there are moral implications. Whenever the system is hurting people, there are moral and religious issues involved,



and the pastor's duty is to identify them and propose solutions . . . <sup>6</sup>

Within the military chaplaincy, and pertinent to this paper, the ongoing discussion of ministry is of extreme importance if for no other reason than the magnitude of the task that is always before us. Much of the magnitude is the result of the speed, complexity, and sophistication that seem to be attached to all aspects of our ministry. For example, Chaplain Mark McCullough argued for the futility of ministry to systems:

The Christian cannot minister to systems. He must be alienated from them. His ministry is, to outsiders to the system, the voiceless, the helpless, the powerless . . . His mission to the system is to call it to its divine purpose . . . His mission is reconciliation of persons who are set at enmity by the system, the weak and the strong, the high and the low.

On the other hand, Chaplain Carl Stephens countered in the same journal:

Before we can legitimately be called "Pastor" by our respective communities, we need to learn to minister to the institutions (systems) we are part of and responsible to.<sup>8</sup>

For the chaplain, this systems understanding of the interrelatedness of the components and their impact in rela-

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<sup>6</sup>Gerhardt W. Hyatt, "The Chaplain As Pastor," Military Chaplains' Review 2:2 (1973) 3-4.

<sup>7</sup>Mark M. McCullough, Jr., "Why Christians Cannot Minister To Systems," Military Chaplains' Review DA PAM 165-117 (Spring 1978) 14.

<sup>8</sup>Carl Stephens, "Why Christians Must Minister To Systems," Military Chaplains' Review DA PAM 165-117 (Spring 1978) 17.

tionship to one another, at the time of change, provides a means of looking at how one does ministry.

Further discussion under the heading of systems theory is now included for the purpose of developing a philosophical/psychological foundation that will eventually be integrated into the actual "contextual applications." Systems theory is compatible with the psychological models most often utilized in pastoral care.

#### Compatibility of Systems Theory and Psychoanalytic Theory

While some systems theorists find the psychoanalytic model incompatible with their view, due largely to the psychoanalytic concept of linear causation, there are other systems theorists who do see compatibility. The Freudian view of the person as a "bio-physical being" and Freud's belief in the reciprocating influence among group members suggests harmony between systems theory and psychoanalytic thought. Further, the ego psychologists view personality as structure interacting among its sub-structures (e. g. id, super-ego).

#### Compatibility of Systems Theory and Analytic Group Therapy

Although most analytic groups use the vocabulary of psychoanalysis, most therapists would agree that the therapy group is an organized complexity (or system) which is the product of the reflexive dynamic interaction among its components.

The general laws of organization hold, regardless of

the nature of the components of the system, their attributes, or the forces which tie the group together.

### Systems Change

Research has shown that the method of changing systems must be appropriate to "the components, their attributes, and the forces that tie the system together."<sup>9</sup>

Analytic interventions (transference resistance) provide group members with information and alternative behavior. Therapeutic paradox puts a patient in a double bind and forces change, in order to avoid yielding to what he/she perceives as the therapist's demands.

### Second Order Change

In the discussion on community, systems theory is especially important in that it makes way for change in the function and structure of community. Systems theory opens a wider possible threshold for growth and alternative ways of existing. This possibility does point to the hope for change; indeed, it is concerned with change. In fact, there are two kinds of change: " . . . One that occurs within a given system which itself remains unchanged, and one whose occurrence changes the system itself."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Durkin, 12-17.

<sup>10</sup>Paul Watzlawick, John H. Weakland, Richard Fisch, (New York: Norton, 1974) 11.

The first change is a first-order change, while the other is a second-order change. Second-order change is important in systemic thinking because systems theory is most concerned with change of the system, rather than "more of the same," Watzlawick explains second-order change in the following manner:

1. Second-order change is applied to what in first-order change perspective appears to be a solution, because in the second-order change perspective this 'solution' reveals itself in the keystone of the problem whose solution is attempted.

2. While first-order change always appears to be based on common sense (for instance, the 'more of the same' recipe), second-order change usually appears weird, unexpected, and uncommon-sensical; there is a puzzling, paradoxical element in the process of change.

3. Applying second-order change techniques to the 'solution' means that the situation is dealt with in the here and now. These techniques deal with their effects and not with their pressured causes; the crucial question is what and not why. Second-order change results from intervention from without the system.

4. The use of second-order change techniques lifts the situation out of the paradox-engendering trap created by the self-reflexiveness of the attempted solution and places it in a different frame....<sup>11</sup>

The concern of the pastor or therapist need not be focused on pathogenesis to the point of being stalled. Focus can be directed on what is happening now and, thus, initiate intervention. The application to community is clearly evident, especially when the community is in need of healing or change.

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 82-83.

### Systems Approach And Marriage And Family Counseling

For the Army Chaplain, the systemic approach to counseling for marriage and family offers an alternative to "crisis counseling" wherein one is under time pressure to bring about some sort of miracle mandated by the service member's commander. Additionally, the frequent moves the service member undergoes require a model that is more flexible and more likely to produce quick solutions than the more analytical approach. The chaplain is able to look at the greater context of marriage/family and begin immediately to move towards change, since the basic idea of the systems approach is "that change occurs when related parts are rearranged - be they atoms or the behavior of closely associated human beings, such as two people related in marriage."<sup>12</sup>

In the life of the military person, the chaplain/counselor can look to the various subsystems that a family or individual represents. In the case of the married soldier, the counselor can take into account the working situation and possibly use that system as a way of introducing enrichment opportunities to a stale marriage situation. An impasse can be broken by means of looking at the subsystem of a child's school experience and thereby introduce change in a

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<sup>12</sup>Don Jackson and William Lederer, The Mirages of Marriage (New York: Norton, 1968) 87.

family system of interaction. Again, the emphasis is on the view towards change in a fairly brief and intense encounter. The chaplain is in the position of looking at, and for, the operatives in any number of subsystems that are incumbent on the lives of the people that are being counseled. Once the basic modus operandi is determined, then the chaplain is able to move in the direction of giving directives to precipitate the necessary or possible changes.

As mentioned previously, one of the most common problems dealt with in counseling military families is that of alienation or rootlessness, due to frequent moves. In this particular situation, the chaplain can likely accomplish more by involving the family system in a series of sessions and remove some of the pressure from the identified problem person and place the problem in more general context. In the case of the family that moves often, especially during times of important growth stage development periods, such as during the children's junior and senior high school years, the counselor would probably have more hope for change if he/she works with the family unit. Satir's belief synopsis is helpful: "First you need to recognize that your family is a troubled family. Second, you need to have some hope that things can be different. Third, you need to take some action to start the changing process."<sup>13</sup> In this context, the chaplain may

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<sup>13</sup>Virginia Satir, Peoplemaking (Palo Alto: Science And Behavior Books, 1972) 19.

well set the stage for the troubled family or marriage by suggesting enough of the above three things that the family will be ripe for the establishment of a contract.

In the development of an agreement or contract with a family, it may be helpful to integrate the approach suggested by Haley. "If therapy is to end properly, it must begin properly - by negotiating a solvable problem and discovering the social situation that makes the problem necessary."<sup>14</sup> In short, Haley points out the need to get off on the right foot by making sure the problem is understood and solvable. One of the most helpful aspects of the systems approach is that it requires more of the counselee in determining what is wrong, than it does of the counselor.

Because the approach suggested here is oriented towards problem solving, it follows that the value of including the entire family enhances the counselor's understanding of the system or structure that maintains the problem situation. In the examination of how the family operates, the counselor can determine something of where the focus is in terms of who the identified problem person, scapegoat, or martyr is. In such cases, it is possible to see how family members are neglected in the problem orientation. Again, in the more specific consideration of counseling families in the military,

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<sup>14</sup>Jay Haley, Problem Solving Therapy (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978) 9.

the whole family's reaction to the military lifestyle and environment can be determined and thereby provide the chaplain with valuable information as to how best to strategize for change.

Defining the problem the family wants solved is of such importance, because it is the grist of the contract. In this matter, the chaplain must necessarily seek out the thoughts and feelings of the entire family, if possible, as to what they think the problem is and what changes in the family interaction should take place for change to occur. Haley notes: "It cannot be emphasized enough that the problem the therapist settles on must be a problem that the family wants changed, but that is put in a form that makes it solvable."<sup>15</sup>

Yet another aspect of counseling in the military environment that is important is that of dealing constantly with the issue of grief. Military persons probably say goodbye more often during military life than at any other time in their life. Additionally, military people are apt to carry from assignment to assignment considerable amounts of unfinished business that takes on the form of grief. The business may have to do with an argument one had with someone else that was never resolved. A soldier may have received a rather painful efficiency report and carry the feelings with him/her. The children of military people, as

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 40.



well as spouses, are often faced with terminating important associations and activities without ever really taking the time to deal with the grief of such change. It is at this point that much of the material developed by Pattison in Pastor and Parish - A Systems Approach, is helpful to the chaplain. Pattison looks at the Church as a system for being, that consists of several nurturing subsystems. The subsystems of an alive parish program are especially helpful in dealing with both anticipatory grief and grief itself. If one counsels with more of an eye on the here and now, as a systems approach allows, then one is likely to keep one's aim on the problem rather than on a too distant and, to the client, irrelevant concern.

In summary, systems theory, by focusing on the relatedness of parts and the impact of change on the whole, gives a useful framework upon which pastoral care to the community can be built. Systems theory is compatible with this paper's emphasis on the importance of community. Pastoral care can draw insight and courage from a systems approach to carry out its mission of healing and reconciliation. Pattison remarks:

Therapy may not be the goal of the system, but it can be the result. While not denying this, I hold that the primary function of the minister is pastoral care of the social system of the church to the end that the church system can provide the necessary basis for being.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>E. Mansell Pattison, Pastor And Parish - A Systems Approach (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) vii.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Systems theory provides an excellent means for understanding and relating to human needs. Such a theory can be incorporated with the evangelical theological model, thereby providing the pastoral care-giver the means for bringing healing and reconciliation to the recognized needs of the various members within a system. Just as a theory of systems opens a way for examining the components and their interdependency, the pastoral care giver in the evangelical tradition brings a theological model committed to caring for the entire spectrum of individual and community needs within their given systems, whether it be a family, church, work, or society. The care giver draws on his/her understanding that God as creator of all and head of the church has established a community of wholeness and care that supports its ministers and opens its doors to all who would enter.

The theological casts of this ministry, practically expressed through the use of a systems approach to counseling and care, is shaped primarily by an evangelical understanding of God, the Bible, the world, and life. Expressed as evangelical, this theological system should not be confused with the more restricted viewpoint of the fundamentalist that is often characterized by a narrow mindedness in matters that differ from their views. It is the daily human experience,

including its pain, suffering, sin, and hurt, that this theological posture seeks to address.

### Theological Essentials

Generally the affirmations of orthodox belief are contained in some form or other within the doctrinal statements of church groups. The statements set out here are intended to express theological essentials considered by the writer to be most supportive of a pastoral care model as described in chapter six of this paper.

1. God is creator and sustainer of the world and has chosen to be an active participant in the human experience. This affirms the belief that God has chosen to remain in fellowship with His creation. God's involvement takes a variety of forms. The foremost evidence on which the above assertion is made is the living reality of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was touched by the infirmities of all humankind. The massive pain and suffering of humankind cannot be associated with a God who is far off and unfamiliar with the effects of that pain. While Jesus did not experience, literally, every sickness, malady, and discomfort, He did experience the full impact of the emotional and spiritual pain these produce. The action of God is viewed to be always in the direction of His creation. In Christ the involvement of God is culminated. All ministering efforts are based on the belief that it is God who has come to His own and that the

minister is an agent of that news. The active participation of God encourages prayer, invites communion, calls for reconciliation, and allows the Christian worker a basis for optimism in his/her efforts to bring a message of hope and expectation for a full life.<sup>1</sup>

2. The most complete revelation of God is Jesus Christ and His earthly experience, to including his humiliation, death and resurrection. The testimony of the pastoral worker to troubled persons rests in workers' own appreciation of who Jesus Christ is. As with most orthodox Christian creeds, Jesus is affirmed as the only begotten of the Father and, as such, enjoys uniqueness that gives Him power and authority in the spiritual arena of life that no other may have. He became the perfect sacrifice for sin and was accepted by God as the sin bearer for all time. He is the very picture of God and all that He wants to be in relationship to His creation. In His life, Jesus experienced the full range of tribulations. In His humiliation He became the greatest of all empathizers. In His death He became God's own means of reconciliation. In His resurrection Jesus is the hope for all who suffer without hope. In Christ God has come to the broken world and offered the abundance of life through His direct involvement and subsequent victory over

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<sup>1</sup>J. I. Packer, Evangelism And The Son Of God (Chicago: Inter Varsity Press, 1961) 27.

its emptiness and despair. Even in the face of life's worst circumstances the victorious Christ enables believers to have a new life by putting their faith and trust in Him.

God's posture towards the human situation is, as a result of Christ's death and resurrection, one in which the human situation is transformed from one of enmity toward the creator to one of communion and restored fellowship.

3. Scripture is the authoritative source for understanding God and His actions, and human responsibilities in relationship to God and others. The Bible is God's word and is worthy of a Christian's best and continued effort to understand and apply to the human situation. As an authority, the Bible stands alone for the evangelical Christian.<sup>2</sup> Evangelical Christians believe the Bible to be uniquely inspired by God, thus establishing it as the standard for all other truth claims. The Bible stands as a trustworthy record of God's actions on the part of humankind. Further importance is attached to the place of the Bible as authority pertaining to matters of faith and conduct as contained in the "truth bearing propositions."<sup>3</sup>

4. The power of God leads to the transformation of not only individuals but whole communities. Evangelicals see

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<sup>2</sup>Gabriel Fackre, in Martin Marty and Dean Peerman (eds.) A Handbook of Christian Theologians (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984) 589

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 592.

much of the relational brokenness attached to the problem of sin and only the atoning work of Christ can break the power of sin's consequences. Out of the transformations come not only individuals but a whole community of rescued people to include the pastoral workers and care givers.

The posture of the Christian worker towards the world and those who seek help and guidance is a posture of demonstrable graciousness. In this writer's view, it is essential that belief be put to practice and applied to all areas of living. This life of demonstration is a reflection of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer issuing forth in love and mercy to all. The basis of all relationships is established in the relationship of the pastoral care worker to Jesus Christ. Because the encounter with God has taken place in the experience of the person helping, his/her view of life is characterized by an attitude of mercy and love.

The pastoral worker enters the arena of human experience with a desire to help and reconcile hurting people. The primary equipment that is essential to the task of ministry includes the above essentials; an affirmation of God's love, power and goodness, a recognition of Jesus Christ as the empathizing means and hope for wellbeing, and a life of dedicated demonstration of the transformation that comes to the believer.

### The Problem of Pain And Suffering

The experiences of people caught in the circumstances or poor relationships, bad health, disappointments, and other instances of pain and suffering are among the reasons pastoral care givers are usually sought out for help. It is this condition of need of people in pain that finds the ministering person in the position of having to deal with both the immediate need and the greater issues of the meaning associated with pain and suffering. Among the challenges facing the pastoral care worker is that of affirming God's love and care even in the face of apparently contrary evidence. The questions of "why" must be addressed if the effect of ministry is going to be adequate. The questions, expressed and unexpressed, seem to make helping all the more difficult due to the dulled responsiveness of those in need. Anger with God, confusion over a situation, guilt, and so on are likely to be elements the worker must face if ministry is to be effective. Sufferers may well feel that God, if He exists, has abandoned or punished them. The pastoral care worker must confront these issues to some extent to be effective.

At the heart of the issue is the ministering person's desire to give understanding, and provide support, while at the same time affirming the power and love of God. The response of this writer to the problem of dealing with the crisis of pain or suffering is to acknowledge the pain while

at the same time affirming the love of God, and proclaiming His power over circumstances.<sup>4</sup> The existence of the problem does not negate the fundamental conviction that God is characterized by both power and love, while choosing not to intervene in most situations where pain and suffering are apparent. The acknowledgement of pain and suffering for the evangelical Christian worker is followed by the need to find meaning and thus lessen the burden of "why" questions. This view includes understanding pain as a means for spiritual growth. In this light, ministry would deal with the immediate need while looking beyond the pain to anticipate an encounter with God. It is in the confidence of God's power and love that the sufferers can move on to the larger issues of the meaning of the situation posed by their pain.

Much evangelical thinking, and the most representative position for this paper about suffering, is related to the Augustinian viewpoint that establishes the fall of Adam as the event that set the race at enmity with God and resulted in the evil that plagues the world. Added to the view of Adam's sin as the beginning of evil is the belief that God withheld His intervention but has sought to bring healing and reconciliation ever since. The idea of the fall and the subsequent human condition suggests that God gave humankind free will and the potential for good and evil. Although God

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<sup>4</sup>Packer, 19.



could intervene He will not limit the possibilities available to humans even though they may choose evil over good. In this way God chooses to remain committed to allowing humans to choose and decide their own destiny.<sup>5</sup>

The unexplainable natural evils that are very much a part of the environment in which we live, e. g., earthquakes, famine, sickness, etc., present very definite challenges to the Christian. It is certainly not a subject easily dismissed, but the answer for this writer is shrouded in mystery. Traditionally, the Augustinian viewpoint concluded that all evil was due to the fall - the whole of creation, down to the smallest life form, was affected, but all will pan out in the end. Another view sees all of creation as having some free will built into its structure so that there is evidence that the elements are even involved with the potential for rebellion. This writer's view on natural evil is not much beyond the "I don't know" stage; however, I find compatibility with two statements. First, God will somehow conclude the age as champion over all good and evil. Second, God will sustain, heal, protect, etc., those who ask His help in some manner. God is the refuge in this hostile environment. The eventual outcome of all life experiences, to include an understanding of evil, rests with God.

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<sup>5</sup>Michael Peterson, Evil And The Christian God (Grand Raouds: Baker, 1982) 54.

By granting free will to humankind, God allowed the recipients of that gift the freedom to choose evil as well as good in the living out of their existence. Because of the vast differences in the choices, free moral agents have available to them, the outcomes likewise are varied; i. e., the same free will that can produce great acts can also produce acts of horror.<sup>6</sup> For God to intervene in the choosing process of His creation would mean that the entire process, whereby creatures choose, would be altered. Greatness would necessarily suffer, although there would be less pain, because free choice is the source from which both goodness and evil emanate. For the conservative Christian believer, the balance is found in the belief that all things will eventually be consummated, both good deeds and evil. In that consummation, all evil structures will be destroyed.<sup>7</sup> In the meantime, the pastoral worker may view the present environment, often hostile to the health and well-being of individuals, one in which the stress and pain produce moral nature and development.<sup>8</sup> What is left for the pastoral worker is to affirm the love and care of an omnipotent, all-loving God in any situation while witnessing to the graciousness of a God

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 150.

<sup>8</sup>Evangelicals agree with John Hick on this point, while not following Hick in his rejection of the Augustinian notion of the fall. See Hick's statement in Stephen T. Davis Encountering Evil (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981) 47.

that contains all sufferers within the "sphere of His love."<sup>9</sup>

Finally, it remains that trust in God in the midst of pain and suffering is the basis Christian hope and confidence of which pastoral workers can remind those who are hurting. Encouraging trust in God may not lead to easy answers for hurting people, but it will provide an atmosphere of possibility for regaining spiritual or emotional composure so the sufferer can re-enter the life experience "down but not out."

The basis for ministry for the worker in the realm of pain and suffering must eventually rest on the worker's own confidence in his/her understanding of the meaning and purpose of pain. Confidence in God's role in the events surrounding the situation will affect the attitude of the care giver and must be thought out in the light of those situations.<sup>10</sup> Certain themes emerge from the existential situation that will guide the Christian worker in the application of his/her beliefs to the ministry to those in need.

#### The Church And Community

Seward Hiltner and Gerald R. Cragg introduce some theological reflections on community which the evangelical pastor can adopt to enrich the theological perspective outlined above. Hiltner reminds the pastoral care worker that

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 94.

the church is the primary social institution that "thinks theologically, teaches theology, and tries to practice insights it possesses through its ministry and service. . . it has concern for all mankind, since all are God's creatures."<sup>11</sup>

Hiltner goes on to express the application of his view of the church's mission as:

1. The Body of Christ. In this expression, the importance of interrelatedness is based on the Apostle Paul's understanding of organic life. Paul understood the value of the parts functioning together, and mutually relying on one another, and having a head "that values the parts and does not conspire to get rid of them."<sup>12</sup>

Cragg adds to the depth of the "Body of Christ" expression:

The characteristics of the true community and of the living organism are the same. In both, we have infinite diversity of parts and wide differentiation of function within an over-riding unity of life and purpose. Each part, in contributing to the life of the whole, contributes also to the well-being of every other member.<sup>13</sup>

2. Next, Hiltner describes the "covenant community" idea which involves promises. These are limitations of choice in the future, in the light of the present. The covenant is

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<sup>11</sup>Seward Hiltner, Theological Dynamics (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972) 108.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 110-111.

<sup>13</sup>Gerald R. Cragg, "The Epistle To The Romans: Exposition," in Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954) ix, 584.

sustained by God's graceful, loving, mercy. The "new covenant" means Christ is the head of the reconstituted people of God". . . The believer is not an isolated Christian; he lives in the people of God, in the church."<sup>14</sup>

3. The household of God is the third expression Hiltner uses in expressing the application of the Church's ministry. The picturesque insight into the early church demonstrates the power of belonging. Based on the biblical idea of adoption, this household became an extended family to its members. The alienated were accepted into full membership, based on God's acceptance of all who would enter the family.<sup>15</sup>

While Hiltner adds several other ideas about the church and its dynamic relation to the world, the above are included to add emphasis to the belief that the pastoral care worker stands on solid precedent in a biblical and evangelical context while ministering to the community. The biblical concepts alluded to provide a model to encourage those who need the ministry of the church. The church's posture in the world community remains one of sacrificial service,<sup>16</sup> a place where the lives of its members are always being changed, and a place where healing may occur, because the head of the body is a healer; also, where the members of the body are being sustained by abiding in the presence of the head.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Hiltner, 113.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 116

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 117

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 119.

### The Priesthood Of Believers

An effective ministry to the community will be accomplished best by a mobilized laity. The position of most evangelicals supports the idea of a priesthood of all believers. The basis of this priesthood is established in the belief that a Christian becomes a priest when she/he is united with other believers through faith in the Mediator, Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup> In the development of a ministry to community, the role of the lay person is essential. The chief motivation is the calling of Christ to penetrate the community with the gospel witness. In this context, Bloesch reminds the reader of several biblical metaphors that add understanding to Christ's call.<sup>19</sup> First is the call to be light in the darkness and salt on the earth. This suggests that our work is enlightenment and flavoring. Both elements have this in common: they are expended and sacrificed when mixed with something else. Second is the metaphor of the leaven. Here the role of the Christian is to be a reconciler and stabilizer. Fishers of men is the third description Bloesch mentions to illustrate the proclaiming role of the believer. Fourth, Bloesch points out the parallel between one's priestly service to Christ and the servant. As the pastoral worker infiltrates his/her community, perhaps the

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<sup>18</sup>Donald G. Bloesch, Essentials Of Evangelical Theology (New York: Harper & Row, 1979) II, 106.

<sup>19</sup>Donald G. Bloesch, The Invaded Church (Waco: Word Books, 1975) 96-97.

servant posture will serve to distinguish their work more vividly than any other function. Fifth, God's ministering people are sent into the world as sheep. This metaphor, juxtaposed to the military environment, causes considerable stress for the believer who seeks to represent Christ as a peace giver and healer. It is also true that the sheep-in-the-midst-of-wolves metaphor is fraught with enormous potential for witness to a sometimes violent environment. Finally, the elect are strangers and exiles in this life. The style of Christian ministry which the follower of Christ exhibits must be identified by its dynamic nature, rather than by a placating, cowardly, non-involvement.

Every Christian is called to walk as a worthy witness to Christ's transforming power and the Church's environment of care and being.

C. W. Brister encourages one to examine the matter of community by stating that the central affirmation of scripture is God's call to humankind for a restored fellowship with Him.

Those cut off from true humanity are summoned to a participant style of Christian living by God's sovereign grace. (Matt. 22:3, Rom. 8:30, Gal. 1:6, Rev. 19:9). . . Such a life is calling to identity (I Pet. 2:9-10), to community (I Cor. 1:9), and to responsibility (Rom. 12:1-2). The Christian's vocation is to "lead a life worthy of his calling," (Eph. 4:1), and to perform the tasks "which the Lord has assigned to him, and in which God has called him." (I Cor. 7:17).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Brister, Pastoral Care In The Church (New York: Harper & Row, 1964) 92.

Thus, it is the purpose of the Body of Christ, the Church, to move into the "highways and byways" for the purpose of making the possibility of community real to the world.



## CHAPTER FIVE

## THE CHURCH AS A SYSTEM FOR BEING

This section aims to integrate the basic ideas of Systems Theory and the theological reflection in the previous chapter. In the chapter on Systems Theory, the purpose was to develop a psychological framework for thinking of community. The theological reflection was cast with a view towards establishing a ministry of pastoral care for the community on an evangelical theological base. The theological ideas lend themselves to furthering the existence of community, especially when the church as community is seen as a system for being in the larger social system of the world. This section is to set the stage for the last section on implication for ministry. Understood systemically and undergirded theologically, the church represents a tremendous potency for growth, healing, redemption and peace.

E. Mansell Pattison's book, Pastor And Parish - A Systems Approach,<sup>1</sup> is the primary source for this section. Pattison's book is an attempt to bring a systems understanding into the context of the church for the purpose of helping to "revitalize" the work of the parish pastor and to re-establish the church in vitality to the center of society.

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<sup>1</sup>E. Mansell Pattison, Pastor And Parish - A Systems Approach (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) vii.

### The Church As A Living System Of Identity

Theologian Helmut Thielicke reminds evangelical readers of the common bond that bound the early church together. While representing immense differences in culture, education, language, and possessions, the members of that dynamic group were "inflamed" by their common bond. The awareness of being in a brother and sister relationship altered the direction of their lives, and subsequently the entire world.<sup>2</sup>

This insight, raised by Thielicke, is parallel to Pattison's approach to the church-system concept. Pattison begins with a reminder of the absence of commitment for most church members in believing that the larger group holds any value for them.<sup>3</sup>

Pattison suggests that life is like two sides of a coin. On one side there is our individualism, an identity of its own. The flip side of the coin is the group identity, and each is reciprocal of the other. "Each is a living system and together they constitute a living system."<sup>4</sup> The problem, as Pattison sees it, is that of an orientation towards an individualistic lifestyle. Our culture is out of touch with the benefits of the group experience. The result of making the group secondary in our culture is that there are many lonely,

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<sup>2</sup>Helmut Thielicke, I Believe (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965) 230-231.

<sup>3</sup>Pattison, 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

alienated people, "the lonely crowd," evidence the result of our culture's self-seeking, self-gratifying quest. There is no real evidence that people are happier for the experience of putting self before others. This lack of social identity leads to a serious questioning of who one is.<sup>5</sup>

Pattison moves on to address briefly the idea of behavior as a total system, which is the result of several subsystems.<sup>6</sup> Basic to this understanding is the belief that what one does is based on who one is. One's behavior is the result of many influences and factors.

#### Principles Of A Living System

Pattison identifies three principles that typify a living system: holism, open synergy, and isomorphism.

Holism is best understood in terms of the statement, "the whole is greater than the sum of the parts." Holism refers to an identity that is new and different from the parts. Holism is the result of the coming together of the parts in which they unify and function in harmony with one another for a mutually satisfying purpose.

Open Synergy refers to the working together of the whole system. Reinforcement takes place in the function. A key concept in both the system's idea and in developing a model of community is found in the concept of synergy, whereby

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 5.

the needs of the unit are met when an individual is meeting his/her needs. The openness is implied to show that the system is able to move and grow. It follows that this introduces the idea of change. The openness of the system allows for, even encourages, change, and when the change occurs in any part of the system, the rest of the parts are affected. These changes can further lead to new possibilities and more revamping of the present systems.

This matter of change is one of the more important issues being addressed in this chapter. Change usually will be regarded as something positive, although it is possible, at times, for the outcome to be other than positive.

The third principle is that of isomorphism, which has reference to shape and purpose, especially as it pertains to the commonness of the system. Each system has its own direction and sense of purpose created by the system. Pattison suggests that uniformity occurs because the parts participate in the direction and character of the whole.<sup>7</sup>

It is in this principle that the blend of individualism and community occur.

The actions of the individual members reinforce and help to shape the action of the group. Likewise, the action of the system reinforces and helps to shape the actions of the individual members.<sup>8</sup>

These basic ideas, combined with the third chapter

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

in which the basic principles of Systems Theory were laid down, set the stage for looking at the church in terms of a system and a place for being and becoming. The church, by its very formation and function, constitutes a system.

### The Church As A System For Growth

Pattison notes that the church, at one time, was an institution that was the community system; it was central in both what the community was and did. As culture mobilized and change took its toll, the church gave way to other social institutions that became the doers in society. The church retreated and seemingly lost much of its sense of purpose and identity. Pattison is of the opinion that the church has not lost its capacity as a place for helping people find meaning and purpose in their lives, for it is still "the social system for being."<sup>9</sup>

The church is then a system, but a system of incomparable composition. Included are so many facets, or subsystems, yet the church exists as the one system that is primarily concerned with being. Pattison believes the church has a special role in relation to the human being.

Personally and professionally I am concerned about how we create wholeness of life - mental health, if you will. To resurrect an old saying, I would contend that "holiness is wholeness." By this, I mean that the church can and should create - be <sup>10</sup>the social system that produces a whole, holy person.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 11.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 12.

Pattison compares the church system to a family system in which the member receives nurture, care, and healing. A church, if it functions as a healthy system, will see to the health and well-being of its members.<sup>11</sup>

Pattison places the church in a systems role and suggests that if it were designed along the lines of the preventive medicine model, it would become systems pastoral care.

Leaders would be trained to deal with social systems at many levels and to function as enablers - enabling the church to become a center of moral enquiry, a center for personal learning, and growth, for human sustenance and nourishment and for human reparation. The pastor would not do all this himself, but would draft a social system that functions preventively at many levels.<sup>12</sup>

#### The Function Of The Church System

What is the function of the church system? Pattison traces, very briefly, the evolution that has taken place in our culture, in which we have moved from the extended family to the nuclear family to psychosocial systems. It is from this point that our next consideration begins.

Life has become fragmented. People are going in different directions, and, for the most part, oblivious as to the impact their meanderings have on other members of the system. Enter the church - for better or for worse. In one

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Pattison, "Systems Pastoral Care," Journal Of Pastoral Care 26:1 (1972) 2.

sense, the church can have a healing effect on the community. In yet another sense, the church can resemble a therapy group in which societal drop-outs come for a sense of belonging. If a church is healthy, it will resemble a natural system that is characterized by:

- multiple interactions
- in many spheres of life activity
  - over continuing and varied times and places
  - that involve effective and instrumental dimensions<sup>13</sup>
  - between people with multiple connections to each other<sup>13</sup>

Pattison characterizes most church systems in the following contrasting fashion:

- single interactions
- in one sphere of life
  - usually at one time and in one place
  - that involve little effective or instrumental change<sup>14</sup>
  - between people with few connections.<sup>14</sup>

Against this back-drop, Pattison offers eight components that he believes characterize a social system:<sup>15</sup>

1. Leadership: There are three functions of leadership that are essential. First, ideas; second, means of action; third, coordination.

2. Commitment: This is in response to the vacuum created by a lack of a system to define common identity, values, and goals along with faith and hope.

Thus, the church system must clearly stand for a view of creation, of life, and of identity. This commit-

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<sup>13</sup>Pattison, Pastor And Parish, 22.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 22-27

ment is the shared identity that forms the cohesive ground of the system.<sup>16</sup>

3. Behavioral Sanctions: This calls for precision in giving the members of the system clear guidelines as to what the expectations are for the system to function properly.

4. Organization: This component enables the system to move and accomplish specific goals.

5. Goals and Tasks: The positive effect of goals and tasks on a system is seen as that which occurs when members of a system share in a task and they build interpersonal relationships. This is especially useful information to keep in mind when considering the possibility for growth in a Christian community.

6. Association: This usually occurs in times when activity is more than goal centered. In times like this, there is opportunity to be in touch with one another on a more personal level.

7. Behavioral Taboos: The function here is to set limits which in turn help clarify behavior. It is through taboos that members gain a sense of what to do and what not to do in relationship with one another.

"In short, people need to know how to respond to each other."<sup>17</sup> The positive potential is in the challenge to bring

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 23.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 26.



about "possibilities for intimacy."

8. Outside Connections: It is essential to a living system, such as the church, to have "connections" outside. "A church system that is out of touch with its community will inevitably fail to prepare its membership for life in the outside community."<sup>18</sup>

### The Sub-Systems Of The Church

Moving to the parts that make up the larger system, Pattison identifies several key sub-systems.

First, there is the proclaiming sub-system through which the church seeks to change world views. At this very moment in our society, the energy situation is causing great turmoil as Americans are faced with the prospects of less gasoline, higher prices, and so on. The church could well address the matters of greed, pride, hoarding, the impact on the poor, to name but a few. The proclaiming sub-system, carried by written and spoken word, the media, etc., can effect, in a very dramatic way, the larger system of society in general.

Second, the church has a symbolizing sub-system. Pattison notes the importance for each generation in a society to "resymbolize its existence."<sup>19</sup> While a sign represents, a symbol, on the other hand, is a purveyor of power, something

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 33.

much more significant than a sign. While the school crossing suggests, represents, etc., the policeman symbolizes the power that enforces what the sign calls for.

Social systems rely more on symbols than on signs, as any effective leader will attest . . . Control of the symbols leads to control of the system. This is why groups will even fight for symbols.<sup>20</sup>

Certainly no symbol is any more primary for the church than the cross. The meaning of that symbol varies in degree, but its true meaning is significantly greater than mere decoration. In fact, the church has invested the symbol with a meaning that is truly powerful, even life-changing.

The symbol draws together and unites an experience. It bridges the inescapable antinomies of life - conscious and unconscious, reason and emotion, individual and society, history and the present. For example, the Christian cross draws together the horizontal and vertical dimensions of life and unites them perpendicularly to each other, embracing their conflict. A symbol is real and efficacious only to those who commit themselves to it.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, Pattison suggests that a system that symbolizes is a system that lives.<sup>22</sup>

The third syb-system is the moralizing sub-system. No area of discussion probably sets the stage for debate like the subject of morality. In moral discourse, all matters of opinion and special interest surface. Yet there is a clearly

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 34.

<sup>21</sup>Rollo May, "Values, Myths And Symbols," American Journal Of Psychiatry 132: 7 (1975) 703.

<sup>22</sup>Pattison, Pastor And Parish, 35.

distinctive subsystem that emerges in this arena. Morality, as a system for decision-making, raises the subject of values. choices, direction, and responsibility, related to daily living in the context of community. Pattison looks to the societal moral aspect first. In society, two things occur: a kind of reciprocal happening. The system is shaped by moral people, and the system, in turn, shapes morals. Further, Pattison stresses the need for morality to be in a flexible state of process. This is not to say he advocates moral relativism. On the contrary, he calls for a relative application of absolute moral norms.<sup>23</sup> A relative application of absolute moral norms would temper the application of consequences for violating the norm in accordance with the individual involved. At the same time, the consequences would always follow the violation of a norm though applied with a view towards restoration of the violator. The need is for concreteness and specificity.

Fourth, Pattison lists the learning growth sub-system. The keypoint of this sub-system is the interrelatedness of learning and growth. A fundamental weakness in this sub-system is the neglectful attitude of letting people learn enough to get by, at which point education is no longer important. Pattison contends that education is essential to wholeness.<sup>24</sup>

The fifth sub-system is the sustaining-maintaining.

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 43.

Two important components of this sub-system are the need for maintenance to keep the system operating, and nourishment to keep it alive.

Following the above is the closely related sixth sub-system, the reparative sub-system. Because stress is thoroughly ingrained into the culture's way of life, great expenditure is made to reduce it, even to eradicate it - a virtually impossible and futile task. The manner in which this sub-system responds to the stress within is of significant interest. Family and personal problems can be met and worked through if this sub-system is truly attentive to the needs of the members. The emphasis is on response and mobilization in time of need. Pattison calls this "systemic repair."<sup>25</sup> Of particular interest in this sub-system is the possibility of linkage between the church and the community. A church whose reparative sub-system is alive and available can and will encompass much more than just the church.

What this sub-system accomplishes is to give impetus to the concept of systems as a means of seeing the church in operation as a system of life, hope and meaning.

#### Implications For Ministry

The ministry of the church community gives a vitality that is unparalleled by any other institution. Through the

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 45.

proclamation of the good news, and service, the church invests itself in the community's needs. Our ministry is one of affirming the existence of persons and ministering to their needs.

Pattison addresses the issues of pastoral care by listing seven leadership functions that are essential to systemic leadership. From these seven functions, implications for ministry are clearly set forth.<sup>26</sup>

1. The Symbolizing Function: The role of the pastoral care person in this phase is activity of an affirmer of the systems symbols. The values and purposes of each system are symbolized and provide a ready source of reference. In a system, the pastor does not tell the system the meaning of the symbol, but he reminds the system, of which he is a part, that the symbol of the cross gives continuous inspiration to all who are willing to accept its message.

2. The Being Function: By accepting one's self as both a person and a part of the system, the pastor affirms him/herself and in turn affirms other members of the system. This leadership function is most vital in that it sets forth an important feature of the church in its relationship to the rest of the world. Being is an important step towards accepting oneself, and the pastor is a key enabler in this act. Henri Nouwen addresses the essence of this by speaking

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 63-69.

to the importance of dialogue in preaching:

I simply mean a way of relating to men and women so that they are able to<sup>27</sup> respond to what is said with their own life experience.

This function moves the pastor to a possibility of relationship with his/her people that includes the setting aside of false pretenses of professionalism and becoming vulnerable as well as a fellow participant in the living out of life's experiences.

3. The Sharing Function: Pattison goes on to remind the reader that the pastor is not the system, but a part of the system. The pastor shares with the system in that it calls for sharing the spotlight, responsibility, authority and control. To share these functions gives the system further opportunity for growth.

4. The Intentionality Function: Intentional ministry and leadership is demonstrated in the quality of the work done. The system will experience direction and purpose from this type of leadership. A mobilized laity and the pastor will invest themselves in their work with precision.

5. Modeling And Risk-Taking Function: Leadership calls for risking in an effort to keep the system moving. People are reluctant to move without leadership, but will more likely follow when shown the direction.

6. The Limit-Setting Function: The pastoral leader

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<sup>27</sup>Henri J. M. Nouwen, Creative Ministry (Garden City: Image Books, 1978) 35.

need to maintain a careful, alert, watch on the direction of ministry to the community. In this capacity she/he will encourage, correct, admonish, or promote, a member of the care-taking sub-system to avoid needless pre-occupations with unrelated matters. The care of the community will best be accomplished by those who will keep it on track.

7. The Catalytic and Enabling Function: Included under this heading is connector of several sub-systems in pursuit of common goals; mediator of conflict and resolutions; facilitator in planning and organizing sub-systems so they can begin to function; and catalyst as one who overcomes resistance and sets ministry into motion.

## CHAPTER SIX

## A CONTEXTUAL APPLICATION

In his discussion of the effect of koinonia groups on the community, Robert Taines states that results can be expected when the church works. "These results may or may not be subject to statistical analysis. They are in the realm of changed and changing lives."<sup>1</sup> The Army community represents a system of components that are largely responsive to a number of influences - some of which, by the way, are factors in causing stress. How, then, can the system be ministered to? The underlying premise of this project is that it comes through the Body of Christ. The church's posture is that of servant to the served - in this case, the world outside. Brister points out: "Being available with a life-giving ministry to members of a spiritually languid society, where one lives and labors, is being the church in the world."<sup>2</sup>

There is a sense of urgency by which the Body of Christ may be motivated. A responsive chord can be heard when lay people are called to serve and minister. This service is inherent in our faith. We are obligated to serve, and to do less is to fail to grasp the over-riding purpose and

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Raines, New Life In The Church (New York: Harper & Brother, 1961) 94.

<sup>2</sup>C.W. Brister, Pastoral Care In The Church. (New York: Harper & Row, 1964) 85.



vitality of the New Testament Church. ". . . every Christian has a ministry because he is a Christian."<sup>3</sup>

The remainder of this project will be given to applying the above statement. The how is primarily contained in a program called, "People Helpers." This program is a mobilization effort that looks to the people of God to bring pastoral care to the military community. It is not an experiment, in that the Community Life Ministry is an on-going ministry; rather, it is a functioning model that is working.

In the preface to his popular book, The Change Agent, Lyle Schaller squarely challenges anyone attempting planned social change:

Anyone seriously interested in planned social change would be well advised to recognize two facts of life. First, despite the claims of many, relatively little is known about how to achieve predictable change. Second, much of what is known will not work.<sup>4</sup>

The Body of Christ meets the challenge of introducing change into its community by presenting the gospel of Christ, living corporately and individually, in a manner that reflects the joy of the Christian life, and by meeting the various needs it encounters in the community.

This final chapter presents a model whereby: ministry to the community system occurs; the various sub-systems of

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<sup>3</sup>Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., Basic Types Of Pastoral Counseling (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966) 282.

<sup>4</sup>Lyle Schaller, The Change Agent (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972) 11.

the Body of Christ are activated; and results are identified.

In a recent article, Carl Henry wrote:

In the big American cities, the churches that thrive tend to be evangelical ministries that involve outreach enlisting a dedicated laity.<sup>5</sup>

Henry observes in the same article that the social acceptance of evangelical Christianity has not been totally dequate.

But all this is far from being an effective evangelical penetration of public mood and conscience. A close look at politics, business education, and mass media shows this.<sup>6</sup>

Henry goes on to point out the apparent lack of impact upon the above systems that demonstrates change in morality, ideals, and spirituality. The community absorbs evangelical thinking too easily. While evangelicals appear to succeed, relatively speaking, in personal witness of their faith, they fall short in affecting the thinking and morals of the secular community.

Henry further points out two priorities that are needed for evangelicals. First, worldly culture must be brought to an awareness that present "cultural commitments" are insufficient for a life of happiness and fulfillment. Second, evangelicals need well-established, intelligent, goals in society, strategy and tactics for an adequate

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<sup>5</sup>Carl F. H. Henry, "A Strategy For The 80's," Christianity Today 24: 1 (1980) 17.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 18.

penetration of society.<sup>7</sup>

Evangelicals are clearly at a loss to show evidence of a credible social or political effort. If ministry is not extended to the world, then there appears to be little change in morals, values, and ideals.

It is the concern for community that produces the examination of both the needs and the response.

	THE CHURCH THAT IS	THE CHURCH THAT MUST COME
Tendency of Group Life	<u>SOCIETAL</u>	<u>COMMUNITY</u>
Effect on Group Life	1. highly organized  2. ministries viewed as performed by agencies of the organization  3. much effort given to maintaining the organization  4. means (organization) tends to receive priority over values  5. status assigned by position in the organization  6. effectiveness evaluated in terms of organizational health (numbers, dollars, etc.)	1. functionally organized  2. ministries viewed as performed by each member of the community  3. little organizational maintenance required  4. values given priority consideration  5. status related to conformity to community values  6. effectiveness evaluated in terms of implementation of community goals
Results	Members are introduced into the organization, and guided to grow in "churchmanship"	Members are introduced into the community and guided to grow in the <sup>8</sup> values of the community.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Lawrence O. Richards, A New Face For The Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970) 53.

James Anderson reminds the reader of To Come Alive that a system is defined by Webster's Dictionary as an "assemblage of objects united by some form of regular interaction, combined so as to form an integral whole."<sup>9</sup> In a very important contribution to understanding the value of a systemic view for ministry, Anderson lists the following:

- A. Seek a vision of the staggering complexity of the whole - cast a jaundiced eye at the boundaries people put on problems - continually question assumptions.
- B. Recognize multiple causes and multiple paths to the solution of problems - an analysis is never more than an approximation of reality.
- C. Pay attention to the functioning, the physiology of the social system - what appears static and moribund is in fact a dynamic field of forces.
- D. Be particularly concerned for linkage - the way parts of a system stay in touch - the way information flows back and forth between the parts.
- E. Never forget that what seems closed and isolated is open and vulnerable - that is, look for the ways the organization is being influenced by inevitable transactions across its boundaries with the environment.
- F. Expect unintended consequences from any change, as the organization moves to re-establish equilibrium.
- G. Know that<sup>10</sup> I am a part of the system, and a part of the problem.

The church sub-systems are varied. In this project, the mobilization of laity means to mobilize the sub-systems to do the work of ministry according to the needs of the

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<sup>9</sup>James D. Anderson, To Come Alive (New York: Harper & Row, 1973) 16.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 20.

larger system. When viewed as a system, the church is composed of a wonderful variety of resources - an illustration of the organism metaphor discussed earlier, the Body of Christ. Smith adds to the importance of viewing the church systemically:

The systems approach to understanding an organization such as the church, implies a concern for whole and for the complex patterns by which the parts of the whole (individuals and sub-systems) interact with one another. Each unit has its discrete function, but no part can really be understood in isolation from other units, because a system is not static but dynamic.<sup>11</sup>

The accomplishment of the task of doing effective pastoral ministry in the military community is done through the following steps adapted from Clergy In The Crossfire:

- A. Enlist - selectively recruit
- B. Educate - develop training program
- C. Enable - provide opportunities to serve
- D. Evaluate - goals, direction, objectives, etc.<sup>12</sup>

#### A. Enlist Selectively

Mobilizing the Body of Christ for the purpose of ministry begins with the mobilizing or calling out selected persons who demonstrate qualifications that indicate some degree of capability. This selection or invitation to ministry is necessarily preceded by the Chaplain's awareness of individuals in the congregation of nearly 1,000 who manifest

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<sup>11</sup>Donald P. Smith, Clergy In The Crossfire (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974) 115.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 118.

some ability.

At the Community Life Center, the authorized staff is just one - the chaplain. The needs, briefly described in the first chapter, are recapitulated here:

1. Therapeutic. In reality, counseling services include more than marriage and family. Counseling, related to stress brought on by several factors, involves a significant number of hours weekly. Mid-life issues, falling short of career expectations, children leaving home, concerns about death, and so on, are the kinds of life issues presented to the chaplain. A number of cases involve children experiencing difficulties in school adjustment, largely due to frequent moves. Sexual disharmony occasionally surfaces as a symptom of problems. The list is representative of both the magnitude of problems and the time demand in this facet of the Community Life Ministry.

2. Outreach. Essentially this portion of the Community Life Ministry is designed to provide general public information in a number of areas to aid in preventing problems. Presently, this effort includes: Seminars in interpersonal communication. Usually these are presented to soldiers at their units, the idea being that it will aid them in their learning to live more effectively in the world, thereby adding to the overall quality of life. Parenting classes come under both this section and the third category, enrichment. Here, par-

ents are encouraged to think beyond where they are with their children at the present and examine potential areas for change, growth, and enrichment. A series of seminars on family development is included under outreach, as they, too, seek to anticipate problem areas before they arise. Workshops on grief are proving useful in that they seem to provide an atmosphere in which grief issues are brought to the surface. Grief issues include death of parents, separation due to military assignment, moving and leaving parents, friends, animals, and surroundings.

3. Enrichment. A distinction from the above section is that while the previous section describes the effort to get ahead of problems by anticipating them, enrichment seeks to build on already established foundations. Marriage enrichment programs are conducted at both weekend retreats and weekly group meetings. Topics include self-awareness, communication, problem solving, intimacy, and other areas of need. Yet another enrichment opportunity is for married women. The energy that is displayed in this group is evidence that such an enrichment group aids those who are in need of personal esteem building, affirmation, and, often, just plain positive conversation. One weekly group deals with their relationships with their children. In this group, already, there is evidence of significantly improved parent-child relationships. A once-a-month series entitled "Saturday Seminars" is

bringing enrichment through such themes as "Family Unity," "Building Family Self-Esteem," "Conflict Resolution," "Sexual Fulfillment In Marriage," and others. So far, these opportunities have been well-received by the general community and have led to some genuinely positive directions in families. Special guest speakers are invited, on occasion, to address topics that touch lives at the point of need.

4. Training. The final facet of the Community Life Ministry Program is that of training. This section best addresses the matter of mobilization of laity in that the matter of training lay persons to do the leading and ministering in the above areas is considered.

Based on the above, it should be clear that effective ministry will be accomplished best if the resource persons are multiplied. The Body of Christ - the system for being and becoming - emerges as a dynamic source for presenting an opportunity for change to occur.

This project asserts the belief that pastoral care is done by responsible, caring, trained laity in tandem with those recognized as clergy, yet viewed as fellow workers rather than gurus or condescending "experts." Howard Clinebell's statement, "Pastoral counseling is a valuable instrument by which the church stays relevant to human need,"<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Clinebell, 14.



gives credence to this concept of mobilized laity.

As a "redemptive organism," the church seeks to demonstrate the positive character of faith by giving its witness through service. A mobilized laity lives its message and reflects to neighbors in need the love of God through Christ. As every member of the Body of Christ accepts the challenge of pastoral care to the community, then the church will be a place for being and becoming.<sup>14</sup>

The rationale for mobilizing lay persons is theologically supported by the material developed in the third chapter. It is the responsibility of the Body of Christ, the people of God, to initiate care and concern towards the larger world community. Findley B. Edge comments:

The priesthood of all believers . . . means that since every Christian is a priest, every Christian also is called to be a minister and has a ministry which must be performed under the judgement of God. This in turn means two things: first, the call to salvation, and the call to the ministry is one and the same call.<sup>15</sup>

Edge describes the insensitiveness that he observes in many congregations where the paid staff does the ministry, and the lay people simply look on. Edge asserts that such a condition means that the wrong people are relied on for ministry.<sup>16</sup>

Early in the month of August, the enlistment effort

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 283-284.

<sup>15</sup>Findley B. Edge, The Greening Of The Church (Waco: Word Books, 1971) 38.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 40.

begins by announcing, via chapel bulletins and the local post newspaper, the opportunity to participate in the "People Helper Program." An announcement appears as follows:

PEOPLE HELPERS WANTED: The community Life Ministry Program, an extension of the Post Chaplain's religious activities program, is looking for potential "People Helpers." "People Helpers" are interested folks that would like to be involved in ministry to the post community. "People Helpers" assist in a variety of events to include leading growth and enrichment seminars, counseling, teaching classes, and so on. Experience or lack of experience need not deter you from applying. For an application, call . . .

There are usually enough opportunities to use most applicants. Applications (see Fig. 2) are sorted according to skills, education, interest, availability, and religious interests. The program is open to all faiths. Once laity are enlisted, what criteria are used to determine who should be selected? At the Community Life Center, the following three principles have been utilized as a means of determining who should be enlisted. The first principle is from How To Be A People Helper by Gary Collins: "In any helping relationship, the personality, values, attitudes, and beliefs of the helper are of primary importance."<sup>17</sup>

In this first principle, Collins doesn't adequately develop the idea to do the kind of ministry the Community Life Ministry requires. Nevertheless, the components of the principle are most useful in determining who should be enlisted.

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<sup>17</sup>Gary Collins, How To Be A People Helper (Santa Ana: Harvest, 1976) 32-40.

FIG. 2.

PEOPLE HELPER APPLICATION SHEET

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SEX \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CHILDREN'S NAMES &amp; AGES \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATION SUMMARY:

YEARS OF SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_ DEGREES \_\_\_\_\_

MAJORS/INTERESTS \_\_\_\_\_

FAMILY OF ORIGIN: (PARENTS, SIBLINGS, OTHER SIGNIFICANT RELATIVES)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHO WAS IN CHARGE? \_\_\_\_\_ WHO WAS MOST AFFECTIONATE? \_\_\_\_\_

TO WHOM WERE YOU CLOSEST? \_\_\_\_\_ ARE YOU CLOSE NOW? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED MEMORY OF YOUR FAMILY? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT SINGLE WORD WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE: YOUR LIFE \_\_\_\_\_,

YOUR MARRIAGE \_\_\_\_\_, YOUR FAMILY \_\_\_\_\_,

YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD \_\_\_\_\_.

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN FRIENDSHIPS?

\_\_\_\_\_

FIG. 2 (CONTINUED)

ARE YOU MORE INCLINED TO: LEAD/FOLLOW? \_\_\_\_\_

INFLUENCE /BE INFLUENCED? \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE MORE SELF-CENTERED/OTHER-CENTERED?

ARE YOU MORE OFTEN UP/DOWN? \_\_\_\_\_ RESERVED/OUT-

GOING? \_\_\_\_\_ CONTROLLED/SPONTANEOUS? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HOBBY? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR BEST TALENT/ABILITY IN TERMS OF PEOPLE  
HELPING? PLEASE BE CANDID. \_\_\_\_\_

IF CRITICIZED, ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO:

SMILE _____	CRY _____	START OVER _____
RUN _____	THROW THINGS _____	GIVE UP _____
CUSS _____	GET EVEN _____	PRESS ON _____
SPIT _____	PRAY _____	POUT _____
LAUGH _____	WITHDRAW _____	LEARN _____

GIVE A BRIEF SPIRITUAL SKETCH OF YOUR LIFE: \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT IS YOUR ONE-WORD RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING:

GOD _____	HOPE _____	LOVE _____
CHURCH _____	HEAVEN _____	PEACE _____
JESUS CHRIST _____	HELL _____	PEOPLE _____
SCRIPTURE _____	HEALING _____	SIN _____

IF YOU BECOME A "PEOPLE HELPER" WHAT KIND OF WORK ARE YOU ESPECIALLY  
INTERESTED IN? \_\_\_\_\_

Collins points out that effective counselors succeed not so much because of their theoretical orientation or techniques, but because of their empathy, warmth, and genuineness.<sup>18</sup>

A first step in recruitment following the announcement is an interview or even informal conversation whereby the prospective "helper" is "tested" for empathy. Simply defined, empathy is that capacity to perceive what another is experiencing and the ability to reflect content and affect. The gift of empathy clearly reflects a ministry of understanding.

"Warmth" is that which a helper broadcasts to others that states, often non-verbally, I care about and accept you.

"Genuineness" suggests a congruence between words and actions. The "helper" is who she/he says, and acts accordingly. In ministry, this quality is especially important, as it is the quality most often associated with credibility.

While there are other criteria to use as a means of seeking out potential helpers, the above three are broad enough and encompass enough to make a reasonable assessment of the helper's quality of life. The first principle also suggests several important ingredients that are useful in determining the qualifications of an applicant.

Helpers need to demonstrate a "theological richness

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 33.

and congruence with Christian tradition.<sup>19</sup>

The importance of this second principle can easily be glossed over in a quest to find the best qualified people. There are available "helpers," but their personal spiritual commitment is minimal. Those working in the context of the Community Life Ministry Program must witness to a personal commitment to God through Christ - in keeping "with Christian tradition."

Personal spiritual development of the "helper" is regarded in terms of the individual's perception of how faith is related to the kind of ministry she/he anticipates doing. Brister comments on the importance of sensitive laypersons in the church.

Sensitive Christians will detect the cries of those who are on the losing side in the struggle for existence. Those who become calloused to humanity's hurt are reminded that God hears man's crying.<sup>20</sup>

Principle number three asserts that the potential helper must be teachable. Clearly, there is no way for most of the volunteers, who respond to the needs of the community through the Community Life Ministry Program, to possess sufficient training to do professional level work. It is, therefore, most important to provide a training program, a supervisory relationship with the Chaplain, and an evaluation opportunity.

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<sup>19</sup>Brister, The Promise Of Counseling (New York: Harper & Row, 1978) 37.

<sup>20</sup>Brister, Pastoral Care In The Church, 102.

In selecting "helpers," the quality of teachableness is very important in determining the use of the person. Presently, helpers in the Family Life Ministry Program include several laypersons of varying experience and training. All are committed to bringing ministry to others.

#### B. Educate:

1. Growthbook: Once helpers have been recruited, it is normal procedure to group them and go through the "How To Be A Helper" program. Utilizing the "Growthbook," which contains twelve chapters, "People Helpers" are led through a six-week period of training, using the "Growthbook" and additional selected material. The format for the "Growthbook" includes: a Bible study, personal exercises to be done at home. Group study projects are included. The "Growthbook" can be completed individually or in a group. The "Growthbook" is written to:

- train people in the helping skills
- increase ability to relate to others
- increase sensitivity to others<sup>21</sup>
- increase helping effectiveness.

It is most helpful to begin training lay persons at a Saturday retreat (See attached schedule - Fig. 3).

2. Didactic: Brister's book, The Promise Of Counseling,

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<sup>21</sup>Gary Collins, People Helper Growthbook (Sant Ana: Harvest, 1976) 7.

Fig. 3

## SATURDAY RETREAT SCHEDULE

0830	Coffee - Get Acquainted
0900	Introduction of Community Life Ministries. Includes discussion of its scope and the nature of the problems encountered.
1000	Introduce People Helper Growthbook, Chapter One.
1100	Chapter Two
1200	Lunch
1330	Introduce Transactional Analysis
1500	Break
1530	Wrap-up. Introduce Rational Behavior Therapy
1630	Adjournment



is selected as a key text resource in the training phase of this model. The need to train "helpers" to assist in pastoral care is furthered when they are put in touch with the following:

1. Pastoral counseling puts people in touch with God. At the top of our agenda in the Community Life Center is the desire to assist people in finding a relationship with God through Christ. While our "witness" may be low keyed, even covert, restored fellowship with God is our ultimate hope for those seeking our help.
2. Pastoral counseling aids in discovering identity.
3. Pastoral counseling aids one in learning to live.
4. Pastoral counseling assists in developing interpersonal competence.
5. Pastoral counseling provides information.
6. Pastoral counseling improves insight, self-understanding, and self-acceptance.
7. Pastoral counseling aids in decision making.
8. Pastoral counseling encourages persons to build on strength.
9. Pastoral counseling points persons beyond themselves to greater causes in the social order.
10. Pastoral counseling opens life to future with hope.<sup>22</sup>

What the ten items above are expected to accomplish is the provision of a framework and statement of purpose. Helpers in the Community Life Ministry Program are expected to see their roles systemically - parts of a system working

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<sup>22</sup>Brister, The Promise Of Counseling, 101-106.

toward change in a larger system. The statement of purpose and discussion of implication will provide this.

### C. Enabled:

This section describes how actual ministry is taking place. In addition to brief descriptions of what is happening, each illustration will be analyzed in the light of what sub-system is being mobilized (Chapter Four). Once recruitment and training have been completed, it is essential to get "helpers" busy doing pastoral care. "Helpers" are the system's components of the people of God, mobilized to bring ministry to the community of the world. Once the initial steps of enlistment and basic instruction are completed, a "helper" is guided into aspects of ministry by the Community Life Ministry Chaplain. Each facet of the program gives opportunity for the activation of a sub-system of the church. The following are examples of how this is contextually applied.

1. Therapeutic. E. Mansell Pattison describes "the reparative sub-system" as a "link between church and community."<sup>23</sup> This sub-system is frequently visible in response to a crisis. Life crises include stress, broken relationships, meaninglessness, etc. When this sub-system of the Body of Christ is

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<sup>23</sup>E. Mansell Pattison, *Pastor And Parish - A Systems Approach* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) 45.

active, it is responding to human need most frequently dealt with in the therapeutic context of counseling. What counseling provides, essentially, is the means whereby people are able to come to some kind of solution to a problem.

What the helper is trained to do in the therapeutic context is to be active in the matters of empathy, genuineness, and warmth. Depending on the skill/training level of the individual helper, it is determined as to whether co-counseling is necessary or not. One of the special advantages of this use of lay persons is the pairing of counselors who have some identity with one problem and, thereby, establish a quicker rapport. As an example: G. is a woman about 35, married and the mother of three children. G.'s husband is a career Army officer. When G. came to this post, she experienced some depression, largely due to a long-standing, yet unspoken, anger at the constant moves, the fatigue of setting up a home over and over again. Because G.'s experience is not an uncommon one, her meeting B. - also the wife of an officer - was beneficial. She was "ministered to" by someone who understood, encouraged, counseled, and cared. Although B. is not a trained counselor, her reaching out to G., and her ability to understand, qualify her as an invaluable resource. G. was not really seeking spiritual guidance when she came to the Chaplain. The referral to B., and the Chaplain's assistance in dealing with the anger and fear, resulted in the eventual release, for this woman, from the

bondage that had so dictated her moods.

S. has college training in psychology, although his Army profession does not call for the use of this resource. S. is a man of many talents, not the least of which is his capacity to encourage trust and openness in others. P. was introduced to S., and, through conversation, S. was able to help P. by sharing something of his own struggles with alcohol, infidelity, boredom, etc. P.'s own search for help was greatly aided by this encounter with S., who offered acceptance and understanding.

J. is the 42-year-old mother of college-age children. J. is pursuing a degree in counseling. A gifted worker with teens and children, she has been especially helpful in co-therapy as an extra ear and eye. J. is able to provide valuable insight/reflection to parents and to the Chaplain.

P. is a recovering alcoholic with an M. A. in counseling. His interest in spiritual matters is coupled with a keen desire to help others who are inadequately coping with problems, by using alcohol as a means of escape. P. is able to work alone and provide the Chaplain with assistance in the area of alcohol abuse counseling.

C. holds an M. A. in Home Economics with a specialty in the area of the effects of divorce on persons at mid-life. C. is especially effective with women who are experiencing problems in this area.

2. Enrichment. This provides an opportunity for the "sustaining-maintaining"<sup>24</sup> sub-system to go into action. It is the function of this sub-system to give the spiritual dimension opportunity to open up. This is especially important in a society that is so focused on external, material matters that matters of the spirit are often neglected.

The Community Life Ministry is particularly adept at functioning in this mode of sustaining and maintaining through the provision of such enrichment opportunities as Systematic Training For Effective Parenting,<sup>25</sup> A Richer Marriage, Marriage Encounter, Saturday Seminars that focus on Family Enrichment, Interpersonal Communication Seminars, and other such programs.

Again, the facilitators and leaders are the "People Helpers" that have either brought their expertise with them to this community, or they have demonstrated some capacity that indicates they are trainable. The parenting class has proven, in many cases, to provide opportunity for parents to gain a sense of the spiritual quality that is inherent in all family constellations, while at the same time providing useful tools for more effective parenting.

"A Richer Marriage" is the title of a seminar that

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>25</sup>Don Dinkmeyer and Gary McKay, Systematic Training For Effective Parenting (Circle Pines: AGS, 1975)

provides marriage enrichment opportunities. Subject matter includes communication, conflict resolution, self-awareness, and sexuality. One of the most dynamic sections is the one on communication, led by a highly skilled lay person. The group usually contracts to meet once a week for a period of five weeks. It is not uncommon for a group to continue to meet beyond that initial contract. The groups are largely composed of people from the community who have little or no chapel relationship.

The "moralizing sub-system"<sup>26</sup> is yet another facet of the sub-systems that are operative in the Community Life Ministry's enrichment program. When matters of discussion arise that include or imply values, the moralizing function of the church sub-system functions. This occurs in almost all Community Life Ministry Programs, in that a common premise of all factes of the ministry is enrichment and is inadequate and incomplete if values are not introduced. Effort is put forth to relate, where feasible, issues of morality to a Biblical understanding.

3. Outreach. This area provides a vehicle for the mobilizing of the "learning - growth"<sup>27</sup> sub-system of the church. The Community Life Ministry's outreach program is presently focused on two opportunities. The first is with young

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<sup>26</sup>Pattison, 36.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 42.

enlisted soldiers. The aim is to teach communication skills and in the process, raise issues relative to values, morals, and other spiritual concerns. At the present time, this responsibility is shared by the Community Life Ministry Chaplain and one lay person. The second opportunity is teaching a counseling course at the Staff College. The students are all military officers, some of whom possess considerable training in counseling. The uniqueness of this effort, and its coming under the learning - growth sub-system, is that while education is the ostensible purpose, ministry is actually taking place in that discussion frequently touches on the student's own hurt and concern.

Because of the inter-relatedness of the sub-system, it follows that ministering lay persons doing pastoral care are actualizing and energizing the sub-systems of the Church for the purpose of changing lives in the larger system of the world community.

And, in turn, it is through its several sub-systems working separately and together, that the church as a whole relates to the community. In this sense, the church is itself a sub-system of the larger community system. It is not a closed system, sufficient unto itself. It is semipermeable, having connecting links both with the lives of its individual members and - through its sub-systems - with the life of the community in which those lives are lived.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 47.

#### D. Evaluation:

Wayne Oates suggests a means of evaluating effective pastoral care.<sup>29</sup> The following is an adaptation of that list:

- A. Has an adequate relationship been formed with the helpee?
- B. Does the helper know the nature of the problem and is the helper comfortable in dealing with the problem?
- C. Does the helper have a clear idea or contract for the situation?
- D. Can the helper self-evaluate as she/he proceeds?
- E. Is the helper in touch.
- F. Has the helper developed understanding?
- G. Does the helper know what change is desired?
- H. Does the helper terminate gracefully?

In the last phase of this model, it is important to make an evaluation on the basis of change that has taken place - in the lives of both the helper and the one helped. Normally, this change is evident in the helper first. It is equally important to provide the helper with feedback and opportunity to make personal observations as to any change they may have experienced.

The final segment on a contextual application touches on the role of the Chaplain. Pattison notes:

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<sup>29</sup>Wayne Oates, The Christian Pastor (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961) 239.



The pastor's role in the church is not directed exclusively to the church, but to enabling the lives of all the members<sup>30</sup> for their inevitable participation in the community.

In the Community Life Ministry, this enabling is a primary effort, as the objective is to get to be or be available to those people who are hurting and in need of ministry. This enablement probably best occurs when the Chaplain understands his/her relationship to the system. Pattison provides an excellent outline for understanding how to enable. Pattison calls this outline "seven leadership functions."<sup>31</sup>

A. The Symbolizing Function. In this role, the Chaplain provides continuing awareness of the group's identity, purpose, values, goals, and so forth.

B. The Being function. By acknowledging one's own personhood, rather than authority, the other group members are encouraged to acknowledge their own identity. Self-acceptance is contagious and encouraging.

C. The Sharing Function. The Chaplain who learns to accept the fact of his/her part in the whole, is less vulnerable to stress, crisis, and change. Shared responsibility encourages growth.

D. The Intentionality Function. The vitality of intentional ministry precludes sloppiness, haphazardness, and general chaos. Intentional ministry inspires other members of the system.

E. The Modeling and Risk-Taking Function. Modeling inspires, encourages, and activates. Modeling and risk-taking are essential to the system's growth.

F. The Limit Setting Function. The Chaplain must be willing to set limits and enforce them. This function should not be construed as an instrument of punishment,

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<sup>30</sup>Pattison, 47.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 63.

rather, it is an effort to reinforce healthy behavior and resist destructive efforts.

G. The Catalytic and Enabling Function. This includes the task of connector of systems, mediator in conflict resolution, facilitating, and catalyst.

The Community Life Ministry Chaplain is the key to the quality of the mobilized lay ministry. If applicants aren't carefully selected, it is possible to include people who are improperly motivated, or so unskilled in relational matters that their inclusion would require a disproportionate amount of time in supervision. Because this is a ministry, the spiritual awareness and the sense of pastoral care must be learned and integrated into the helper's thinking about ministry. Because the vehicle for understanding is done systematically, each helper must develop a sense of both being part of a system and the function of the sub-system (Chapter Three), out of which she/he is operating. The Chaplain must have a clear sense of objective and purpose that becomes a vision for "system ministry" that can, in turn, be passed on to ministering lay persons. Clinebell's note with regard to the clergyman's function is appropriate:

What, then, is the clergyman's function? He is, by his training and ordination, equipped and designated to function as a leader and a specialist in that which is the work of every Christian. Instead of being a one-man band who plays each Sunday for a passive congregation, he should be the conductor of an orchestra, who helps each person make his unique contribution to the symphony of the good news. His key role is described in Ephesians - "to equip God's people for work in His service" (4:11-12, NEB). His job is to train, inspire, guide, coach, and work alongside the lay ministers as a "teacher

of teachers," "pastor of pastors," and "counselor of counselors."<sup>32</sup>

It is not the function of the Community Life Ministry to be an experimentation center. The Community Life Ministry is a functioning ministry with a largely non-Christian clientele. The magnitude of the task, coupled with the requests for help generated by helped people, demands that an all-out effort on the part of a loving laity be set in motion.

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<sup>32</sup>Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., Mental Health Through Christian Community (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965) 283.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## CONCLUSION

The confluence of a systems approach to pastoral care and a theological viewpoint that seeks to acknowledge honestly the effects of pain and suffering, while at the same time affirming the goodness, power, and love of God, emerges as a means whereby community can be developed. This project basically asserts that a systems approach to pastoral care enhances the movement of alienated people towards community by affirming the multi-relational life experience, to include the good and the bad, as the best means to wholeness. Coupled with the systems approach to pastoral care, the movement towards reconciliation with God and the subsequent participation in the Christian community, the Body of Christ, gives the pastoral ministry an important distinction.

Facilitating the actual contextual application, as outlined in Chapter Six, is the pastoral worker, "people helper," who models the graciousness of God in the actual encounter with the hurting person. The worker's acknowledgment that the painful life experience may weaken one's resolve to live a full life demonstrates the possibility it may, at the same time, be the means by which the hurting person begins to discover spiritual life and moral strength. It is actually out of these experiences that one may re-enter the community. It is in the actual sharing with people in

their experiences that the pastoral worker becomes most representative of the redemptive potentials she/he represents.<sup>1</sup>

The community from which the pastoral worker ministers, the church, allows the hurting person the opportunity to truly become all that he or she can be in an environment of acceptance, hope, and freedom.<sup>2</sup> Here, a person may begin to touch the bedrock of meaning even while enduring pain. In the community of the redeemed, it is with fresh vigor that one may set to the task of living free of fear, guilt, and other such burdens, because the energy for this community is the transforming power of God which offers reconciliation to all who will accept. It is truly the possibility for a changed life that makes the function of a Community Life Center unique. It is also in the community of the redeemed that one may truly live.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters And Papers From Prison (New York: Macmillan, 1953) 382.

<sup>2</sup>Karn Griffin, "The Church As A Therapeutic Community," in Ray S. Anderson (ed.) Theological Foundations For Ministry (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 747.

<sup>3</sup>Elton Trueblood, The Company Of The Committed (New York: Harper & Row, 1961) 45.

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